

REMARKS**Status of Claims**

The Office Action mailed January 31, 2005 has been reviewed and the comments of the Patent and Trademark Office have been considered. Claims 1-20 were pending in the application. Claims 1, 3, 6, 8, 9, and 19 have been amended, claim 2 has been canceled, and no claims have been newly added. Therefore, claims 1 and 3-20 are pending in the application and are submitted for reconsideration.

This amendment changes and deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, are presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

Applicants thank the examiner for indicating that claims 10-20 are allowed and that claims 2-5, 8, and 9 contain allowable subject matter. Applicants have incorporated the features of claim 2 into claim 1. Therefore, independent claim 1 is now in condition for allowance in accordance with the indication in the office action. Please note that the only other amendment to claim 1 better conforms that claim to U.S. claim drafting practice and does not change its scope in any way. Likewise, the claims 6 and 19 have been amended to improve their readability and not to change their scope in any way.

35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph, Rejection

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, as being indefinite. Applicants have amended this claim to address the issue raised in the office action and submit that this claim is now in definite form and meet the requirements of § 112, second paragraph.

Prior Art Rejections

In the Office Action, claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,195,515 to Levine (hereafter "Levine '515") in view of U.S. patent 5,943,473 to Levine (hereafter "Levine '473"). Claims 6 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable Levine '515, in view of Levine '473 as applied to

claim 1 above, and further in view of U.S. patent 6,043,468 to Toya et al. (hereafter "Toya"). Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the subject matter indicated as being allowable with respect to claim 2. Accordingly, the pending claim 1 is allowable over the applied prior art and the remaining rejected claims depend therefrom.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, and in view of the indication of allowability in the office action, applicants submit that the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. If there are any questions or if an examiner's amendment would facilitate the allowance of one or more of the claims, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper, or if a petition for extension of time is required for timely acceptance of same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge deposit account No. 19-0741 for any such fees; and applicants hereby petition for any needed extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

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